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Subject: California Rewrites the GOP's Climate Playbook; North Carolina's NCEJN and NCCJS Summits and Religious Communities are Taking On Climate Change

California Rewrites the GOP's Climate Playbook; North Carolina's NCEJN and NCCJS Summits and Religious Communities are Taking On Climate Change

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September 25, 2017

Critical information about the environment delivered weekly



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Campus/Community Action & Current Events

Attend the NCEJN'S Annual Environmental Justice Summit on October 20th – 21st.

Titled “Building People’s Power Against State Violence Through the Lens of Environmental Justice”, this year’s summit will detail harms inflicted upon the NC’s most marginalized and dispossessed communities through policies, laws, individual acts, and representation. NCEJN is committed to calling out state violence in all forms. This transformative event brings together community members, policy makers, advocates, researches, and organizers to provide useful information and create a framework for addressing the current violence inflicted upon marginalized communities. It continues to be located at the Historic Franklinton Center in Whitakers, NC. For more information, you can register on their [website](#).



**Attend the 4th Annual NCCJ Summit on Nov 17-19 at
Haw River State Park in Browns, Summit NC.**



Creating an interracial, intergenerational, and interdisciplinary space, the 4th Annual North Carolina Climate Justice Summit brings together various professionals, students, campus faculty, frontline community members, and environmentalist imploring them to explore the four R's—Reimagine, Recreate, Resist, and Reform. This year will focus on 5 threats to frontline communities: Atlantic Coast Pipeline, Coal Ash, CAFO Hog Waste, Gentrification, and Deforestation. To register or for more details, visit the [website](http://www.ncclimatejustice.org).

**Clean Water for NC's Regional Summit on the
Proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the Raleigh
Rate Hike Hearing: Preventing Harms to Eastern NC's
Water, Air, Communities and Environmental Justice**

Saturday, October 7 NEW DATE, 1:30 – 5:30 PM, Light Refreshments
Wilson Community College, Del Mastro Auditorium
902 Herring Ave E, Wilson, NC

[Learn more here](#)

Comment on Duke Energy Progress Rate Hikes in Raleigh!



Monday, September 25: Rally and Public Hearing on Rate Hikes

5:30pm: Rally on Raleigh at Halifax Mall (behind the legislative building)

6:00pm: Sign up to speak at the Public Hearing

7:00-10:00pm: Public Hearing at the Utilities Commission, Commission Hearing Room 2115, Dobbs Building, [430 North Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC](#)

[Facebook event](#)

The North Carolina Utilities Commission is taking public comment on Duke Energy Progress's largest proposed increase to residential bills since the 1980s - a 16.7% increase, or about an extra \$20 per month! Duke Energy Progress wants you to pay on your bills for.

While hurricanes struck, Scott Pruitt was up to some interesting activities

The devastation from hurricanes Irma and Harvey, the two weeks of catastrophic flooding, and the toxic aftermath should have been opportunities for the head of the EPA to snap into action. Had Scott Pruitt done so, it would have been in stark contrast with his tenure so far, which has mostly consisted of making the case that the regulatory power of the EPA should be undermined and



advocating that his agency be made smaller in size and scope, be deprived of a robust budget and enforcement power, and shift focus to what he likes to call “regulatory certainty” for polluting industries.

A week ago, George W. Bush’s EPA administrator, Christine Todd Whitman, wrote a scathing assessment in the [New York Times](#) of how Pruitt has been performing on the job. “The agency created by a Republican president 47 years ago to protect the environment and public health may end up doing neither under Mr. Pruitt’s direction,” she noted. When reflecting on Pruitt’s performance during Hurricane Harvey, she added that the EPA’s recent actions, including the [EPA’s attack](#) on an AP reporter, “are only the latest manifestations of my fears. [Read more at Grist](#)

California rewrites the GOP's climate playbook



In statehouse testimony, speeches that would typically build to Republicans stridently aligning against carbon pricing went off script. "First thing I want to make clear, I personally think cap and trade sucks," California

Assemblyman Devon Mathis said at the beginning of a short speech. As he spoke, he came close to tears while urging his compatriots to vote "yes" for the program he'd just disparaged. So what the heck was happening there?

[Dan Kahan](#), a professor at Yale who studies the way tribal identity affects how people think, has long argued that Republicans will become more willing to engage on climate change as constituents begin asking them to bring home money to adapt to a warming world. "The sooner the issue becomes one about dollars and cents for the districts," he says, "the more quickly the logjam we have now will break loose." [Read More at Grist](#)

Energy, Climate, and Environmental Justice

Religious communities are taking on climate change

Before Pastor Jim Therrien, 49 , moved to New Mexico, he rarely thought about environmental issues. Back in Kansas, where he was born and raised, the grass outside his home was always green, and though the state had an active oil industry, companies fenced off well sites



properly and promptly cleaned up spills. But then he and his family saw the impacts of energy development on the Southwestern landscape and their new church community. Therrien began to think about the connection between the local environment and the broader issue of climate change.

Every day, Therrien, a blond, ruddy and tattooed man of Irish descent, looked out his window and saw a dry land getting drier. Residents told him that winters used to be much colder and snowier. The hotter temperatures thickened the methane haze, and oil and gas traffic tore up the dirt roads. Therrien started to see these problems as injustices that conflicted with Christian values. So he decided to take a stand. Churches have long played a crucial role in social movements, from the civil rights era to immigration reform. Why not environmental activism? Inquire further at [High County News](#)

Port Arthur Suffer Slow FEMA AidThousands of Low-

Income Residents in Flooded



More than two weeks after a plea from the mayor of Port Arthur, Texas—"Our whole city is under water"—went viral, thousands of flooded-out residents remained homeless, and community leaders, angry with the speed of the federal government's response, were

considering a former youth correctional facility for housing. The government began installing large, [temporary tents](#) for groups of residents to stay in while more permanent arrangements could be made.

In the weeks after the storm, residents had struggled to find housing. "They are living wherever they can lay their heads at this particular point—garages, with relatives, with friends, in cars, you name it," Hilton Kelley, director of Community in Power and Development Association, said. "Infants, the handicapped are also homeless. We have a lot of elderly folks; all of them are homeless." Learn more from [Inside Climate News](#)

Pursuing A Toxic Agenda

The [Environmental Data & Governance Initiative](#) (EDGI) is an organization comprised of academics and non-profit employees that promotes open and accessible government data and information along with evidence-based policy making.



“Pursuing a Toxic Agenda” is the second part of a multipart series on the early days of the Trump administration. In this series, EDGI authors systematically investigate historical precedents for Trump’s attack on the EPA, consequences for toxic regulation and environmental justice, and changes to the public presentation of climate change. Refer to [EDGI for more](#)

Air, Food, Water and Transportation

“Why should we tolerate a diet of weak poisons...” — Rachel Carson

Harvey stirs up a toxic, industrial soup



Texas is home to 28 oil refineries, more than any other state, along with [half of U.S. chemical manufacturing](#). Most of these facilities are [clustered along the Gulf Coast](#), where Hurricane Harvey just dumped [a year's worth of rain](#) in a few days.

For the neighborhoods bordering Houston's industrial facilities, an average day brings air polluted with nitrogen oxide, benzene, sulfur dioxide, and other harmful byproducts of the manufacturing processes that drive the city's economic engine. People in these communities face cancer rates [more than 20 percent higher than the city as a whole](#).

When Harvey forced many of these power plants and refineries to shut down, huge quantities of toxic chemicals — as much as [2 million pounds](#) of them — were released into the air all at once. Nearby residents reported [“unbearable” smells](#), and some were even told to “shelter in place” as authorities weighed the necessity of evacuation amid rising floodwaters. [More from Grist Here](#)

Fluoride exposure in utero linked to lower IQ in kids, study says

Increased levels of prenatal fluoride exposure may be associated with lower cognitive function in children, a new study says.



The study, published Tuesday in the journal [Environmental Health Perspectives](#), evaluated nearly 300 sets of mothers and children in Mexico and tested the children twice for cognitive development over the course of 12 years. Fluoride is not added to public water supplies in Mexico, but people are exposed through naturally occurring fluoride in water and fluoridated salt and supplements.

The study found a drop in scores on intelligence tests for every 0.5 milligram-per-liter increase in fluoride exposure beyond 0.8 milligrams per liter found in urine. However, although the researchers found a potential connection to a child's exposure to fluoride in utero, they found no significant influence from fluoride exposure on brain development once a child was born. [Read More from CNN](#)

Firefighters Turn Up the Heat on Flame Retardants

"Who would want to live in a world which is just not quite fatal?" —Rachel Carson



Retired firefighter captain Tony Stefani always had plenty to worry about when he used to run into burning buildings: Will the roof collapse? Are there people who need rescuing? How fast is the fire spreading?

But not once in 28 years did Stefani worry about flame retardants, a class of chemicals now found in everything from furniture and airplanes to breast milk and umbilical cord blood.

That changed in 2001 when Stefani's doctor told him he had a rare form of cancer usually found in people who work in the chemical industry. At first, he didn't understand. After all, Stefani, who looks like a cross between a younger Clint Eastwood and TV's *Mad Men* character [Roger Sterling](#), had always been in excellent physical shape.

But after his doctor explained that firefighters are exposed to a number of toxic substances while on the job, Stefani realized that he had been working in a "chemical soup" all along. Learn more from [Earth Justice](#)

Proterra's Electric Bus Breaks a World Record for

Range—1,100 Miles on a Single Charge

On Tuesday, electric-bus startup Proterra announced a world record by test-driving an electric bus for a whopping 1,100 miles on a single charge. The previous world record for electric-vehicle range was 632 miles for an electric bus and 1,013 for an electric car.



The milestone shows how battery-powered autos are quickly developing into a competitive form of transportation, even compared to gasoline vehicles.

Researchers at Bloomberg New Energy Finance predict that electric cars will be cheaper to buy than gasoline cars in the U.S. and Europe by 2025. The analyst team at Wood Mackenzie predicts sales will hit 100 million by 2035. That number could be conservative, given how quickly vehicles are improving. Learn more at GTM about the [Electric Bus](#).

Pesticides

In wake of new Monsanto seed, Illinois sees more crop damage



Monsanto and German chemical company BASF also touted a new, less volatile version of dicamba that wouldn't drift like traditional versions.

But where the companies saw a solution, Illinois crop scientist Aaron Hager saw major problems coming.

Instead of weed-free fields, the dicamba herbicide drifted off target throughout non-dicamba-resistant soybean fields in the Midwest and South. Leaves cupped in nearby fields. Growth was stunted. Some plants withered and died.

As a result, the Illinois Department of Agriculture has received 368 complaints so far in 2017, which are more alleged pesticide misuse complaints than in the previous three years combined, according to a review of a statewide database of complaints by the Midwest Center for Investigative Reporting.

[Read more at Investigate Midwest](#)

The Rachel Carson Council, founded in 1965, is the national environmental organization envisioned by Rachel Carson to carry on her work after her death.

We promote Carson's ecological ethic that combines scientific concern for the environment and human health with a sense of wonder and reverence for all forms of life in order to build a sustainable, just, and peaceful future.

Over the years we at RCC have been devoted to providing you the public with important, timely information about the environment. RCC exists because of donations from individuals like you.

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